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NIDA R. SAMONA  
LIQUOR COMMISSION  
CHAIRPERSON

## **Bulletin No. 3133-17**

Date: August 15, 2008  
To: Michigan Beer Wholesalers  
From: Michigan Liquor Control Commission  
Subject: Exploding Beer Bottles

Recently the Michigan Liquor Control Commission was made aware of an incident in the metropolitan Detroit area involving a six-pack of Atwater Beer that exploded on a retailer's premises, unfortunately resulting in injuries. The wholesaler involved subsequently removed all Atwater products from the market place. The Commission was then advised of several other incidents in the same market area also involving Atwater bottles exploding over the summer. The Commission also recently became aware of a similar incident in Virginia involving injury that is still under investigation. In each of the Michigan incidents, the bottles were in warm shelf areas, a warm car, or a warm garage. A survey of all other Michigan wholesalers distributing Atwater uncovered no additional incidents involving exploding beer bottles of Atwater or any other beer in any other Michigan market area. The Michigan incidents appear to be localized and the product has been removed from that impacted market area.

Occasionally, micro brewers and sometimes even larger brewers experience problems with exploding beer bottles. Many things can cause exploding bottles including the integrity of the glass bottle and secondary fermentation occurring in the bottle. To date, the cause of these recent incidents has not been determined. Non-pasteurized beers, often produced by micro brewers, are more susceptible to secondary or wild fermentation, which can be accelerated by exposure to heat and light. It's probably not a coincidence that these incidents occurred in the summer months. Wholesalers are advised to remind their retailers to use caution by avoiding heat and light whenever possible when storing beer, in particular non-pasteurized beer.

The Commission will continue to monitor this situation and would appreciate your assistance in doing so. If you are aware of any situations in your market areas involving exploding containers of any brands of beer, please contact the Lansing Enforcement Division at (517) 322-1370 or by email at [mlccinfo2@michigan.gov](mailto:mlccinfo2@michigan.gov).